

Message Text

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SUBJECT : THE GAMBIA MARKS U.S. BICENTENNIAL

1. THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA ON MAY 15 ISSUED A SET OF THREE COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS MARKING THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL YEAR. THE STAMPS WERE OFFICIALLY ISSUED AT A SPECIAL CEREMONY IN BANJUL, CAPITAL OF THE GAMBIA, BY SIR ALIEU JACK, MINISTER OF WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS.

2. IN SEQUENCE THE 25 BUTUT, 50 BUTUT, AND ONE DALASI 25 BUTUT DENOMINATIONS DEPICT THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS TO INDEPENDENCE. THE FIRST STAMP PORTRAYS A MINUTE MAN READY FOR COMBAT, THE SECOND A SOLDIER OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMY, AND THE HIGHEST VALUE DISPLAYS A MINATURE COPY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

3. IN ASSOCIATING THE GAMBIA WITH THE XVIIIITH SENTURY IDEALS "THAT ENGENDERED IN THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE USA THE SEEDS OF REVOLUTION AGAINST COLONIALISM," SIR ALIEU SAID: "THOSE IDEALS OF FREEDOM AND EQUALITY, THE RIGHT TO FIGHT REPRESSION AND STAY OPPRESSION IF ONLY TO ENSURE THE RIGHT TO SOVEREIGNY FOR ALL PEOPLES, ARE MORE VALID TODAY THAN THEY WERE 200 YEARS AGO. THE VALIANT WILL OF THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA, RHODESIA AND OTHER PARTS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA TO BE LIBERATED, IS

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PAGE 02 BANJUL 00491 171028Z

A CONFIDENT REMINDER AND EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO ALL

WHO CHERISH THE LOVE OF FREEDOM TO RENDER POSITIVE ASSISTANCE TO LIBERATION IN THOSE PARTS."

4. AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE GAMBIA, O. RUDOLPH AGGREY, ACCEPTED A SPECIAL DISPLAY OF THE STAMPS ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES, AND IN RETURN HANDED THE MINISTER AN AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL FLAG AND A MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION FROM PRESIDENT FORD. IN HIS REMARKS THE AMBASSADOR SAID THE U.S. AND THE GAMBIA WERE "AMONG THOSE OF THE WORLD'S NATIONS WHICH SO VALUE DEMOCRACY THAT WE SHARE COMMON COMMITMENTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, MULTI-PARTY COMPETITION IN DOMESTIC POLITICS, AND BROADLY BASED ECONOMIC PLURALISM."

5. EXPRESSING AMERICAN APPRECIATION FOR THE GAMBIA'S SYMBOLIC GESTURE, AMBASSADOR AGGREY DECLARED: "DRAWING ON THE LESSONS OF AMERICAN HISTORY OVER THE PAST 200 YEARS, WE KNOW THE MEANING OF STRUGGLES FOR INDEPENDENCE, FOR RACIAL EQUALITY, FOR ECONOMIC PROGRESS, AND FOR HUMAN DIGNITY. A MAJOR THEME OF SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER'S RECENT EXCHANGES WITH AFRICAN LEADERS WAS REAFFIRMATION OF AMERICA'S FIRM COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE OF MAJORITY RULE AND RACIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA."
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